

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Page 11, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 6 as follows:

Next, the processing sequence that suppresses a rise in the temperature of the probe 10 will be described with reference to FIGS. 6, ~~7(a)~~ 7(A) and 11.

Page 17, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 4 as follows:

Instead of the B image judging unit 13 and the Doppler signal judging unit 14, the CFM judging section ~~27-15~~ may judge with the CFM image. The CFM image is displayed using, as video information, the three types of information of the speed, direction, and the variance in the speed of a moving portion inside a living organism. The speed of the moving portion is displayed by brightness, and the direction of the movement of the moving portion is displayed by allocating colors in accordance with the direction. When the probe 10 is left in the air, the phase of the Doppler signal becomes inconsistent at each point in the entire image or the region of interest, so the brightness and color hue are inconsistently displayed. Using this characteristic, the CFM judging section ~~27-15~~ judges that the probe 10 is left in the air on the basis of the variance in the brightness and color hue of the CFM image in the entire image or the region of interest, and outputs the left-in-the-air detection signal. The method of determining the variance is as was described in the preceding embodiment.

Page 29, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 6 as follows:

Next, temporally continuous plural B images are again acquired (step 302). The detection of a temporal change in the brightness of the acquired B images is conducted in the same manner as in step 301. (~~Step~~ step 303). When it is judged that there is no temporal change in the brightness, the processing of step 302 is again executed. When it is judged that there is a temporal change in the brightness, processing that returns the frame rate to its original status is conducted (step 108).

Namely, in step 303, by detecting that the brightness of the B images has changed temporally, it is understood that movement has arisen in the site presently being imaged, or that the probe 10 has been moved from being left in the air to contact the test subject. In this case, it is judged that a high frame rate is necessary, and the value of the frame rate is returned to its original value.

Page 31, please amend the paragraph beginning at line 13 as follows:

An ultrasonic diagnostic apparatus pertaining to the present invention has been described on the basis of embodiments, but the present invention is not limited thereto. For example, it was detected that the probe 10 is left in the air on the basis of a temporal change in the brightness of the frame image, but this may also be detected on the basis of a temporal change in the reflection echo signal including a conveyance wave from the transmitting/receiving section 12. Namely, the reflection echo signal when the probe 10 is left in the air becomes different from the reflection echo signal from the tissue of a living organism because it is a multiple signal multiply reflected by an oscillator matching layer and lens inside the probe 10. Thus, by using the characteristic of the reflection echo signal as the judgment standard, it can be detected that the probe 10 is left in the air. The reflection echo signal differs for each type of probe, so it is good to measure, per probe, the reflection echo signal used as the comparison reference data. This may also be detected on the basis of a complex signal from the AD conversion unit—14.

Please delete pages 39-45 in their entirety.